

U.S. Census Bureau News

U.S. Department of Commerce • Washington, D.C. 20233

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 2011, AT 8:30 A.M. EST

Timothy Winters / Ian Thomas
Service Sector Statistics Division
(301) 763-2713

CB11-04

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES DECEMBER 2010

The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for December, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$380.9 billion, an increase of 0.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the previous month, and 7.9 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above December 2009. Total sales for the 12 months of 2010 were up 6.6 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$) from 2009. Total sales for the October through December 2010 period were up 7.8 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The October to November 2010 percent change was unrevised from +0.8 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

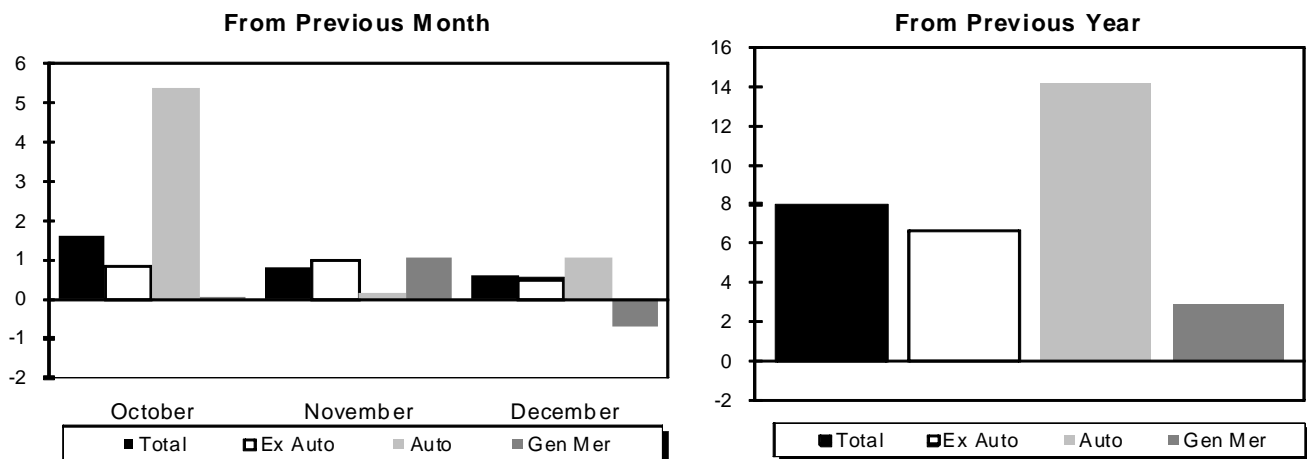
Retail trade sales were up 0.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from November 2010, and 8.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers sales were up 15.0 percent ($\pm 3.1\%$) from December 2009 and auto and other motor vehicle dealers sales were up 14.7 percent ($\pm 2.3\%$) from last year.

The scheduled release dates for 2011 are as follows: January 14, February 15, March 11, April 13, May 12, June 14, July 14, August 12, September 14, October 14, November 15, December 13.

The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Census Bureau's full retail and food services sample. A stratified random sampling method is used to select approximately 5,000 retail and food services firms whose sales are then weighted and benchmarked to represent the complete universe of over three million retail and food services firms. Responding firms account for approximately 65% of the MARTS dollar volume estimate. For an explanation of the measures of sampling variability included in this report, please see the Reliability of Estimates section on the last page of this publication.

Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(Estimates adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for January is scheduled to be released February 15, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. EST.

For information, visit the Census Bureau's Web site at <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different than zero.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Total sales estimates are shown in millions of dollars and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS ¹ code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted ²				
		12 Month Total		2010			2009		2010			2009	
		2010	% Chg. 2009	Dec. ³ (a)	Nov. (p)	Oct. (r)	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. ³ (a)	Nov. (p)	Oct. (r)	Dec. (r)	Nov. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	4,405,172	6.6	442,292	376,564	365,517	408,576	345,700	380,869	378,578	375,460	352,888	352,231
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,643,583	5.9	376,676	316,391	302,804	351,276	294,276	312,789	311,207	308,196	293,258	292,619
	Retail	3,931,288	7.1	401,696	338,624	324,950	370,345	309,546	340,675	338,472	335,571	314,733	313,851
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	105,670	92,062	136,746	100,355	(*)	97,319	96,373	93,369	92,765
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	761,589	10.3	65,616	60,173	62,713	57,300	51,424	68,080	67,371	67,264	59,630	59,612
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	683,359	11.1	59,127	53,690	55,920	51,334	45,672	61,335	60,667	60,585	53,473	53,480
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	44,178	45,624	42,689	37,279	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,483	6,793	5,966	5,752	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	91,544	2.3	9,184	8,113	7,285	8,986	7,862	7,647	7,568	7,573	7,539	7,466
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,256	3,950	4,192	4,089	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,857	3,335	4,794	3,773	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	102,699	2.6	13,441	9,826	7,559	13,252	9,754	8,441	8,495	8,600	8,288	8,525
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,644	5,797	10,555	7,795	(*)	6,561	6,640	6,556	6,790
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,182	1,762	2,697	1,959	(*)	1,934	1,960	1,732	1,735
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	288,387	6.3	22,658	23,940	24,558	20,228	20,915	25,224	24,734	25,003	22,298	22,247
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,499	19,839	17,269	18,022	(*)	19,676	19,701	18,750	18,871
445	Food & beverage stores.....	589,467	2.4	54,743	49,722	49,466	52,906	48,092	49,669	49,951	49,656	48,381	48,574
4451	Grocery stores	525,479	2.3	47,219	44,254	44,068	45,738	42,851	44,295	44,521	44,245	43,149	43,328
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,551	3,528	4,583	3,346	(*)	3,530	3,532	3,387	3,366
446	Health & personal care stores	264,192	3.8	25,539	22,131	22,109	23,820	20,825	22,803	22,445	22,378	21,402	21,536
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	18,749	18,681	20,208	17,902	(*)	18,900	18,756	18,338	18,399
447	Gasoline stations	433,375	16.2	37,710	35,914	37,240	33,599	32,707	38,717	38,125	36,726	35,109	35,018
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	219,251	5.1	30,314	20,420	17,753	27,955	18,750	18,682	18,719	18,346	17,397	17,395
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	757	714	1,033	689	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,385	3,082	4,149	3,191	(*)	3,146	3,104	2,928	2,988
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,415	6,984	10,582	7,661	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,321	2,189	2,935	2,145	(*)	2,352	2,316	2,225	2,184
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	88,154	5.4	12,725	7,930	6,414	11,762	7,004	7,583	7,552	7,449	7,077	6,840
452	General merchandise stores.....	610,704	3.0	72,887	56,076	49,652	70,475	53,915	51,365	51,727	51,172	49,953	49,428
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	186,655	-0.8	26,833	18,570	14,515	26,762	18,436	15,420	15,725	15,290	15,621	15,500
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,010	14,838	27,375	18,879	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	37,506	35,137	43,713	35,479	(*)	36,002	35,882	34,332	33,928
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,698	30,728	37,941	31,067	(*)	31,562	31,451	30,256	29,843
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,808	4,409	5,772	4,412	(*)	4,440	4,431	4,076	4,085
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	120,096	6.8	12,162	10,177	10,704	11,424	9,093	10,122	10,253	10,460	9,531	9,469
454	Nonstore retailers	361,830	13.5	44,717	34,202	29,497	38,638	29,205	32,342	31,532	30,944	28,128	27,741
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,451	22,288	29,826	22,006	(*)	24,025	23,635	20,931	20,644
722	Food services & drinking places ...	473,884	3.1	40,596	37,940	40,567	38,231	36,154	40,194	40,106	39,889	38,155	38,380

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business.

(NA) Not available (S) Suppressed (a) Advance estimate (p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics>

(2) Estimates are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variation and for holiday and trading day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-12 ARIMA program. The factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted estimates shown in this table. Year-to-date seasonally adjusted sales estimates are not tabulated. Adjustment factors and explanatory material can be found on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/retail>

(3) Advance estimates are based on early reports obtained from a small sample of firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS) sample. All other estimates are from the MRTS sample

(4) GAFO represents firms which specialize in department store types of merchandise and is comprised of furniture & home furnishings (442), electronics & appliances (443), clothing & accessories (448), sporting goods, hobby, book, and music (451), general merchandise (452), office supply, stationery, and gift stores (4532).

(5) Estimates include data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line are not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>

Table 2. Estimated Change in Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Percent Change ¹					
		Dec. 2010 Advance from --		Nov. 2010 Preliminary from --		Oct. 2010 through Dec. 2010 from --	
		Nov. 2010 (p)	Dec. 2009 (r)	Oct. 2010 (r)	Nov. 2009 (r)	Jul. 2010 through Sep. 2010	Oct. 2009 through Dec. 2009
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.6	7.9	0.8	7.5	3.3	7.8
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.5	6.7	1.0	6.4	2.6	6.5
	Retail	0.7	8.2	0.9	7.8	3.6	8.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.1	14.2	0.2	13.0	7.1	13.9
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.1	14.7	0.1	13.4	7.7	14.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	1.0	1.4	-0.1	1.4	-0.4	1.8
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-0.6	1.8	-1.2	-0.4	-1.6	1.6
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	2.0	13.1	-1.1	11.2	5.3	13.2
445	Food & beverage stores.....	-0.6	2.7	0.6	2.8	1.5	2.8
4451	Grocery stores	-0.5	2.7	0.6	2.8	1.5	2.7
446	Health & personal care stores	1.6	6.5	0.3	4.2	1.9	5.1
447	Gasoline stations	1.6	10.3	3.8	8.9	6.2	10.6
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.2	7.4	2.0	7.6	2.6	6.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.4	7.1	1.4	10.4	3.3	8.0
452	General merchandise stores.....	-0.7	2.8	1.1	4.7	1.0	3.0
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-1.9	-1.3	2.8	1.5	0.2	-1.0
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-1.3	6.2	-2.0	8.3	1.4	8.8
454	Nonstore retailers	2.6	15.0	1.9	13.7	4.8	14.1
722	Food services & drinking places	0.2	5.3	0.5	4.5	1.3	4.8

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) Estimates shown in this table are derived from adjusted estimates provided in Table 1 of this report.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Survey Description

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services Survey (MARTS) to provide an early estimate of monthly sales by kind of business for retail and food service firms located in the United States. Each month, questionnaires are mailed to a probability sample of approximately 5,000 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Firms responding to MARTS account for approximately 65% of the total national sales estimate. Advance sales estimates are computed using a link relative estimator. The change in sales from the previous month is estimated using only units that have reported data for both the current and

previous month. There is no imputation or adjustment for nonrespondents in MARTS. The total sales estimate is derived by multiplying this ratio by the preliminary sales estimate for the previous month (derived from the larger MRTS sample). Detailed industry estimates are summed to derive total estimates at broad industry levels. The monthly estimates are adjusted using annual survey estimates and for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences. Additional information on MARTS and MRTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at: <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Reliability of Estimates

Because the estimates presented in this report are based on a sample survey, they contain sampling error and nonsampling error.

Sampling error is the difference between the estimate and the result that would be obtained from a complete enumeration of the sampling frame conducted under the same survey conditions. This error occurs because only a subset of the entire sampling frame is measured in a sample survey. Standard errors and coefficients of variation (CV), as given in Table 3 of this report, are estimated measures of sampling variation.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the percent change estimate is +1.2 percent and its estimated standard error is 0.9 percent, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.5 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.3 percent to +2.7 percent. If the interval contains 0, then one does not have sufficient evidence to conclude at the 90 percent

confidence level that the change is different from zero and therefore the change is not statistically significant. Estimated changes shown in the text are statistically significant unless otherwise noted. For a monthly total, the median estimated coefficient of variation is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (the estimated monthly total). The Census Bureau recommends that individuals using estimates in this report incorporate this information into their analyses, as sampling error could affect the conclusions drawn from the estimates.

Nonsampling error encompasses all other factors that contribute to the total error of a sample survey estimate. This type of error can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, mistakes in the recording and coding of data, and other errors of collection, response, coverage, or processing. Although nonsampling error is not measured directly, the Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the process to minimize this type of error.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates Dec 2010

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey and Monthly Retail Trade Survey)

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Median CV ⁽¹⁾ for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error ⁽¹⁾ for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change ⁽²⁾	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
	Retail	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.2	1.1	0.5	1.3	0.2	0.7
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.5	1.2	0.6	1.4	0.2	0.7
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	3.1	1.6	0.9	2.0	0.1	0.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.6	0.6	0.3	1.0	-0.1	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers.....	3.1	1.5	0.8	2.1	0.3	0.4
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	-0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	-0.1	0.3
446	Health & personal care stores	1.9	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	2.5	0.5	0.3	1.1	0.2	0.2
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.4	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.1	0.6
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	3.5	1.9	1.1	2.1	0.1	0.7
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.4	2.1	1.5	2.8	0.3	1.1
454	Nonstore retailers	2.0	0.8	0.7	1.9	0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places ..	1.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	0.2	0.3



- (1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading-day differences. Medians are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.
- (2) These columns provide measures of the difference between the advance-to-preliminary and preliminary-to-final estimates of month-to-month change for the same pair of months as measured by the Advance sample and MRTS sample. The average and median revisions are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.

Note: Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>